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## BUILDING DEPARTMENT

# Town of Spanish Building Permit Information Guide

October 2011



phone 705-844-2300 or  
Ron LeBlanc, Tulloch Engineering 1-800-797-2997

### **The Whys and Hows of Building Permits**

The Town of Spanish's mandate is to ensure a safe, clean, healthy, functioning community which secures the well-being of its residents. That philosophy extends to the private and publicly-owned buildings of our community. By enforcing building codes, and assisting builders, designers and homebuilders, we endeavor to ensure that the structures they create are safe not only for today, but for many years to come. Below you'll find answers to frequently asked questions concerning building permits including when they are required and how the application process works.

### **What is a building permit?**

A building permit is a document which grants legal permission to start construction of a "building," as defined by the Building Code Act of Ontario .

### **What is a building?**

The Building Code Act of Ontario defines a building as: (a) a structure occupying an area greater than 10 square metres (108 sq. ft.) consisting of a wall, roof and floor, or any of them or a structural system serving the function thereof including all plumbing, works, fixtures and service systems appurtenant thereto, (b) a structure occupying an area of 10 square metres (108 sq. ft.) or less that contains plumbing, including the plumbing appurtenant thereto, (c) plumbing not located in a structure, (c.1) a sewage system or (d) structures designated in the building code.

The Building Code Act states that: no person shall construct or demolish or cause a building to be constructed or demolished in a municipality unless a permit has been issued therefore by the Chief Building Official. The Building Code Act also defines construct to mean the doing of anything in the erection, installation, extension, material alteration or repair of a building which also includes installation of a building unit fabricated or moved from elsewhere.

### **What construction projects need building permits?**

A building permit is required for any new building greater than 10m (108 ft), any addition to an existing building, any material alterations to an existing building which effects: the structural design of the building; mechanical; electrical; plumbing services (no limit on size of building); fire separations; exiting; fire protection systems; and the use of buildings or parts thereof. Below you will find a list of typical residential and commercial, industrial and institutional projects that require a building permit

For residential dwelling units (single family, semi-detached and rowhousing), projects requiring a building permit include:

- decks greater than 600mm (24 inches) above ground
- interior structural alterations
- adding or removing most walls, (i.e., creating different room sizes and/or uses)
- porches
- basement or main floor walkout alterations
- sunrooms
- solariums
- carports
- attached or detached garages, sheds
- replacement of masonry chimney
- dormers or finishing of attic space
- installation of irrigation systems
- additions
- installation, repair of storm, sanitary and water service
- finishing a basement or a portion thereof
- conversion from septic to sanitary sewer
- plumbing and/or drains (except replacing fixtures)
- insulating exterior walls when exterior or interior cladding is removed
- new or structural alterations to windows or doors
- installation or repair of private sewer systems and water service
- structural fire damage
- where Municipal sewage system is not available, applicant must obtain a separate permit from Algoma Public Health phone 877-748-2314

For all other buildings, (Commercial, Industrial, Institutional), projects requiring a building permit include:

- change of use (where construction is proposed or the change constitutes an increase in hazard)
- interior renovations within a floor area affecting fire separations, exits or structural capacity
- interior finishing of shell buildings for tenants (ie. occupancies in commercial or industrial malls and office buildings, etc.)
- fire places and wood burning stoves
- fire and water damage affecting interior renovations within a floor area affecting fire separations, exits or structural capacity
- additions to any building having a combined area of 10m<sup>2</sup> (108 sq. ft.) or more
- installations and major alterations of sprinkler, standpipe, fire alarm or mechanical (HVAC) systems
- plumbing installation and alterations, except replacement of fixtures
- installation or replacement of storm and sanitary sewers, water service (ie. catch basins, weeping tile, clean-outs, change from septic system to sewers)
- installation and repairs to sewage systems (septic systems and holding tanks)
- retaining walls exceeding 1 metre (3 ft.- 3 inches) in exposed height adjacent to public property, to an access to a building, or on private property to which the public is admitted
- tents greater than 60m<sup>2</sup> (645 sq. ft.)
- where Municipal sewage system is not available, applicant must obtain a separate permit from Algoma Public Health phone 877-748-2314

### **What projects do *NOT* require a building permit?**

A building permit is not required for a detached accessory structure (gazebo, tool shed, etc.) which measures less than 10m<sup>2</sup> (108 square feet) in area. **Note:** Although a building permit may not be required, you must still comply with the requirements of the Zoning By-law and Ontario Building Code requirements. An application must be submitted along with a site plan, cost is \$35.00. Below is a list of other projects that do not require a permit.

- fences (other than for swimming pools)
- decks not forming part of a principle entrance to a dwelling unit and less than 600mm (24 inches) above grade
- asphalt roof shingling
- eaves troughs
- minor repairs to masonry
- damp proofing basements
- air conditioning units or heat pumps added to existing forced-air systems
- kitchen or bathroom cupboards without plumbing
- free-standing satellite dishes
- pool heaters
- painting and decorating
- landscaping

## **Why are building permits needed?**

Permits ensure that construction within our municipality meets with standards set out in the Ontario Building Code. In addition, building permits are necessary to ensure that other applicable laws such as zoning by-laws, site plan control by-laws etc. are complied with.

## **Who should apply?**

It is the property owners responsibility to ensure that a building permit is obtained when required. You may authorize your contractor or designer to apply for the permit, but the owner should ensure that they have the permit prior to any work starting.

## **What services are provided by the Building Official?**

The Building Official reviews all applications for building permits to ensure compliance with zoning by-laws and building code requirements.

As well, we perform inspections upon notification to ensure work complies with the approved plans and the Ontario Building Code. Our Building Official Ron LeBlanc is available to answer any questions 1-800-797-2997.

## **How do I apply?**

**Step 1** Visit the Town Office or phone 705-844-2300 or phone Ron LeBlanc at 800-797-2997. An application for a building permit along with other related information will be made available to you.

**Step 2** Submit application

The permit application requires information about the construction project. You'll be asked to document who will perform the work, what work will be done, where the work will be done, and how the work will be done. Scaled drawings, plans or other documentation of the proposed work will have to be submitted for review. Included with the submission, the plans must have the designer's B.C.I.N. registration number, except where a home owner is preparing their own drawings or for residential accessory structures under 30sq. meters (538 Sq. ft) Your application form should be brought to the Town Office accompanied by the following:

- two sets of building plans drawn to scale suitable for examination (floor plans, elevations and cross-sections, roof trusses and heating, as appropriate)
- two copies of your property survey or site plan
- a building permit fee payable by cash, Interact Direct Payment, or cheque, payable to Town of Spanish.

## **What is the cost of a building permit?**

Building permit fees depend on the floor area and type of building being constructed or altered. The minimum permit fee is \$75.00. For larger projects it is based on \$10.00 per thousand dollars of construction cost. As an example a

new 1200 square foot house, the permit fee would be approximately \$2,000.00. Please contact the Town of Spanish 705-844-2300 or Ron LeBlanc at Tulloch Engineering 1-800-79-2997 for the updated fee schedule from the Building By-law.

You may also be required to submit a \$200.00 refundable deposit for structures over 300 square feet. This deposit will be refunded after the Occupancy Permit is issued, if no issues arise during the construction.

## **What happens once the application is submitted?**

### **A review process is initiated**

Permit applications are processed as quickly as possible dependent upon the nature of the work requested. Our Building Official will determine if your project is in compliance with the Building Code, zoning and other municipal by-laws and provincial regulations through the following reviews:

### **Plans Examination**

Drawings are reviewed to ensure compliance with the Ontario Building Code.

### **Results of the review process**

If compliance with the building code, zoning and other applicable regulations is determined, the application is approved and a permit is issued. If compliance is a problem, you will be contacted by Ron LeBlanc, to assist in meeting requirements.

## **When can work start?**

The building permit is the document granting legal permission to start construction. No work can start until the building permit is issued; this is normally no longer than a one-week process for residential building additions and alterations, depending upon the information submitted. For other types of buildings, the process time will depend on the nature of the work as well as the information submitted. For example, two weeks is the normal processing time for new single detached dwellings.

You must proceed with construction as approved by the application review process. The Building Code requires you to post the building permit in a window or other prominent place at the construction site, keep a copy of the building plans at the site, and bring any proposed changes to the attention of the Building Official immediately. Changes may require a review and approval in the same manner as the original application.

## **What inspections are required?**

Each major phase of construction must be inspected by our Building Official to make certain the work conforms to the Building Code, the building permit and the approved plans. The mandatory inspections required for your project will be indicated on the permit.

## **How do I get my project inspected?**

Inspections do not happen automatically. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that a request for an inspection at least 48 hours before work proceeds from one inspection stage to the next. Failure to have inspections performed may result in having to uncover and expose work for inspection or the commencement of legal action.

Phone 705-844-2300 or Ron LeBlanc, Tulloch Engineering at 1-800-797-2997 to book an inspection.

If our Building Official finds that some work does not conform to the approved plans, he will advise (and, possibly, provide written notice) that the situation is to be remedied. If the violation is serious, a stop work order may be posted until the problem is resolved. Another inspection may be necessary before work is resumed.